

TOWN OF HOPKINTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting
Town, School District, Hopkinton Village and Contoocook Village Precincts
Wednesday, November 10, 2021
****APPROVED December 8, 2021****

CALL MEETING TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mark Zankel called the meeting to order at 5:31pm immediately followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT – There were 9 Members present and 1 absent.

Committee Member	Attendance	Committee Member	Attendance
Don Houston	Present	Rich Houston	Present
Norm Goupil	Present	Thomas Lipoma	Present
Ken Traum	Present	Christa Scura	Present
Steve Reddy	Absent	Mark Zankel	Present
Jonathan Cohen	Present	Deb Norris	Present

OTHER ATTENDEE:

Michael Flynn, Superintendent of Schools, Hopkinton, NH

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 13, 2021

Ken Traum motioned, seconded by Norm Goupil, to approve the minutes of October 13, 2021.

Mark Zankel asked if there were any corrections needed.

A vote was taken to approve the motion for the approval of the minutes of the Budget Committee meeting of October 13, 2021.

Committee Member	Vote	Committee Member	Vote
Don Houston	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Mark Zankel	Abstained
Jonathan Cohen	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved

HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT BUILDING, BUDGET AND FINANCIALS UPDATE – Norm Goupil

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Norm Goupil began his report noting that supporting documents had been sent electronically.

Norm began with a report on the Building project of the Hopkinton School District. He was pleased to report that the facilities project is complete!

Norm Goupil then talked about the Budget stating the School District received \$225,000 back to the project. The District will discuss how and where to use these additional funds. He stated that the District's plan is to improve our schools and that the decisions made regarding the use of these funds will be for that purpose. Norm stated that a meeting is scheduled for November 22 to determine how to use these additional monies.

Norm Goupil stated if anyone is interested in receiving a hard copy of the reports from the Bond project, it is available. He stated that he is looking forward to working with the Budget Committee going forward.

Norm Goupil stated that it is always good to document goals. The Strategic Plan Committee will develop a strategic plan to meet the goals of the community. Norm reviewed September financials and he then asked Michael Flynn to speak further about the School District's budget and its financials.

Michael Flynn stated that there has been several meetings of the School Board since he last met with the Budget Committee to review wants and needs. Michael stated that the school board has come up with a budget they can present to the Budget Committee that reflects what they need.

Michael Flynn discussed the ESSR money stating it has a long life span which may help us alleviate the initial cut and support target areas with this fund. He stated that the School District needs to let the community know the process and how we get to the tax rate.

Don Houston suggested that a spreadsheet would be helpful to chart where the ESSR funds are used.

Michael Flynn stated that this information will be provided noting they don't have available for this meeting.

Norm Goupil stated that at the meeting of October 13 there was question about the salary of two positions and that it would be addressed at this meeting.

Michael Flynn addressed these questions by stating that the Director of Curriculum is a full time position where the responsibilities include looking at the structure and leadership of the district and make recommendations that helps it succeed. The Director will provide an evaluation and target what we need to grow. He stated that reports on how the students are doing will be coming out of this position. He stated every student is different and requires different diplomas to help them get ready and to succeed.

Michael Flynn stated that the Director of Facilities position is more than the title indicates. He stated that this position is one of working, directing, managing, etc. He stated that the return on investment of the Director of Facilities is great.

There were questions about the comparison of salaries with other towns and Michael Flynn stated that they fill positions at a lower rate but there is a big turnover as a result. As soon as other positions became available they leave.

Michael Flynn stated that all of this information is still in negotiation and will be providing an update at the next meeting.

TOWN FINANCIAL UPDATES – Ken Traum

Ken Traum provided documents and began his report with the 2022 Tax Rate Estimation. He stated that in regard to the wages that there are drivers that we have no control over. He stated that some positions are difficult to fill. He stated that the 20% increase does not take into account for any of the fund balance.

Ken Traum stated that another item at joint meeting was the Georges Park. He stated this is maintained by the Town not the school. He stated that a resolution will be made on a more reputable way to maintain, etc.

Ken Traum reported that Select Board will meet and hope to finalize the budget by November 29 and present to Budget Committee on December 8 meeting and will allow the following week for questions.

Mark Zankel asked the Budget Committee to note the following dates for future meetings:

December 8 – Final Town Budget

December 15 – Question Session if needed

January 12 – School Budget

January 19 – follow up with School Budget

February 9 – Budget Committee

February 11 – Budget Committee Snow Date

It was agreed that the documents for the Town Budget be presented electronically.

Ken Traum then reported on the 2021 Budget Expense Summary stating it is running below budget.

CONTOOCOOK PRECINCT FINANCIALS UPDATE – Don Houston

Don Houston reported there are no significant increases.

HOPKINTON VILLAGE PRECINCT FINANCIALS UPDATE – Thomas Lipoma

Thomas Lipoma reported there are no financials to report at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Zankel opened the public comment session and noted that there were no persons in attendance. Mark closed the public comment session.

OTHER BUSINESS

Don Houston reported that it is anticipated that a large increase in interest rates can be expected for next year.

Discussion was held on the impact that this will have and as to whether the Town should consider a bond and how those funds would be utilized in light of the anticipated challenges in obtaining contractors to provide the work that the bond would be intended for. The discussion raised questions about utilizing the funds for other smaller purchases. When the contractor situations improves the funds that were intended for the smaller projects could be used towards the bigger projects. Members concerns that the interest rate will increase and we could be saving dollars by utilizing the bond now even if for other purposes. Other members concerns were putting off buying due to inflation that we aren't aware of.

It was agreed that Tom Lipoma would review the CIP line items and present the Bond Scenario Analysis he prepared to the Capital Improvement Plan Committee at their next meeting.

As time is of the essence, Don Houston asked Tom Lipoma to review the CIP in the next 3 to 4 days.

Ken Traum requested Don Houston to send an email informing the date the CIP meeting will be held.

Motion by Ken Traum, seconded by Jonathan Cohen, to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further discussion, a vote was taken on the motion to adjourn.

Committee Member	Vote	Committee Member	Vote
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved		

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.

The next meeting of the Budget Committee will be on Wednesday, December 7 at the Town Hall at 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy Brown, Budget Committee Minute Taker
Town of Hopkinton